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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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GRAND JURY INDICTS BANK ROBBERY CONSPIRACY

BALTIMORE, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that a federal grand jury has indicted MARIO D. SIMUEL, a/k/a "Blue," "Darryl Brown," "Jamie," age 39, DUANE CURTIS CHASE, a/k/a "Curtis," "Yellow," "Reds," age 43, JOSEPH SHAWN MCKENNY, age 35, KEVIN THOMAS MCNEILL, age 35, KAFIA JONEIFA BURNETT, a/k/a "Fia", age 19, CIERRA DANITA DILLARD, a/k/a "Baby," "Big Baby," "Little Gangsta," age 18, KENNETH JAMES EADS, age 32, SHATIKA NICOLE LAWSON, a/k/a "Tika," age 24, and DEVON WENDELL LITTLE, age 39, all from Baltimore, Maryland, for crimes committed in connection with conspiracy to commit armed bank robbery and robbery, and various individual armed and unarmed bank robberies.

The 9 count indictment charges the defendants with robbing several banks in Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County between July 23, 2003 and October 17, 2003, including:

First Mariner Bank, 60 Painters Mill Rd., Baltimore, MD	7/23/03	\$11,341
Wachovia Bank, 1730 York Rd., Lutherville, MD	8/12/03	\$ 5,911
M&T Bank, 9840 Reisterstown Rd., Owings Mills, MD	8/20/03	\$12,737

M&T Bank, 705 Frederick Rd., Catonsville, MD	8/25/03	\$20,183
First Mariner Bank, 7400L Ritchie Highway, Glen Burnie, MD	9/05/03	\$ 3,076
Mercantile Bank, 6227 N. Charles St., Towson, MD	9/10/03	\$35,379
Wachovia Bank, 1730 York Rd., Towson, MD	9/29/03	\$23,917

SIMUEL was in the Volunteers of America halfway house when he allegedly recruited others to participate in these bank robberies. He is alleged to have located banks for others to rob in return for a share of the proceeds from the bank robberies.

SIMUEL is currently in federal custody and is scheduled for a detention hearing on Wednesday, October 29, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. before the Honorable Beth P. Gesner. The remaining defendants have been arrested on Baltimore County charges related to the conduct charged in this indictment.

The maximum sentence for armed bank robbery is 25 years in prison, 20 years in prison for unarmed bank robbery and 5 years in prison for conspiracy to commit bank robbery.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a joint investigation by the Anne Arundel County Police Department, Baltimore City Police Department, Baltimore County Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Attorney's Office. The success in bringing the indictment is due to the extraordinary efforts by all of these law enforcement agencies, and will be continued by the bank robbery task force being put in place shortly. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bonnie S. Greenberg.